Address.

Vol.6,No.22.

Subject.

Memorial Day.

BURLINGTON, VT., _____ 189__

II. Introduction – Decoration day compared & contrasted with Independence day.

Worthy Commander – Ladies & Gentlemen:

What the Fourth day of July has been for a century to the American people, a yearly commemoration of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States, which declaration was made of value and secured by a seven years war – such in substance is the 30th of May – an anniversary commemorating the new birth of our Republic. It calls up the memories of those of our comrades who gave the sacrifice of their lives in order to consummate this grand result. It does not dispense with the old national holiday – but it precedes it, as in

the order of the church ritual the solemn reminders of the cross and the grave precede those of the crowning joy and glory of the Resurrection. We to day remember the costly sacrifice — the lives laid on our Country's altar, and strew flowers upon the graves where their ashes repose one month before we make the jubilee of a nation's joy and glory over the liberty born in '76 ~~and~~ subsequently many times confirmed

III. Objections answered — A stay-at-home confederate — The feeling of soldiers on both sides.

~~A few days~~ Some time ago in a neighboring city, the next day after a lecture had been delivered on the battle of Gettysburg, an officer of the army heard a conversation between a native born American ~~gentleman~~ and several Germans concerning the

lecture. The American remarked "that he was a Southern man - that it was time all this talk about the war was hushed - the war was over - the troubles settled, and it only renewed bitter feelings to recall them." The Germans opposed him and argued in favor of keeping fresh the record. The listening officer after a time inquired:- "Sir, were you in the confederate army?" "No, Sir, I ~~have been~~ lived twenty-five years on the Pacific ~~this~~ coast."

The class of men of whom this American is a representative can hardly be satisfied. History itself will necessarily annoy them. But this is not the case with those Southern men who were opposed to us in the field. I have met many a confederate officer since the war and never without having had a pleasant conversation with him recalling the battles in which we were both engaged. Our own

soldiers do not mean that their valiant deeds nor those of their comrades shall be forgotten — and every brave opponent I have met seems equally unwilling to blot out his record. I noticed a remark made by one of our prominent Generals in Richmond, Va, in reply to a speech of a late confederate officer, Bradley T. Johnson, which is at this time more anticipatory; the sentiment is now in favor. He says: "The war through which we passed developed and proved on both sides the noble qualities of American manhood. It has left to us soldiers, once foes, now friends, a memory of hard fought fields, of fearful sacrifices, of heroic valor, and has taught a lesson to be transmitted to our children, that divided we were terrible, united we shall be forever invincible". This speech which

was made to southern soldiers with demonstrations of applause, does not imply the repression of history, but on the contrary a memory — sacrifices — valor and lessons to be transmitted.

It is the very thing, Gentlemen, you propose by a memorial day — a commemoration of sacrifices — of valor and the constant teaching to your children those lessons whose primary record was written in toil and suffering and in blood.

Of course we have the advantage for for example teach unfailing loyalty to the Constitution & to the flag.

IVII. Public resolutions against memorials

Our ~~late~~ honored senator, Charles Sumner, doubtless entertaining a strong desire to exhibit to the conquered a magnanimity that in the past he had not been believed by them to entertain, introduced, in the Senate, a series of resolutions looking to the doing away with those public memorials and insignia that would perpetually remind

our people, north and south, of the great civil strife then brought to a close. His popularity suffered exceedingly from this cause, and you will remember how hard it became for the Massachusetts legislature to repeal its act of censure, though they were life-long friends who were required to record their votes against him. And for one I am glad indeed, not that Mr. Sumner had to endure the pain of censure; not that it was hard for his friends to obtain forgiveness for him; but I am glad that the loyal people of the land are not willing to mar our inheritance by diminishing, ignoring or forgetting the brilliant record of her sons.

IV. Objections to war itself.

But back of all this – back of the expediency in a national and social point of view of memorial occasions and emblems of

~~If~~ our great struggle lies ~~a real~~ an alleged objection touching the conscience of a large body of reasoning and thinking people. It is stated positively in this way: war is wrong — wrong in itself — therefore the support given to it by praises and paeans to its heroes, by public reminders of its glories and its victories, and by ~~endeavoring~~ enduring monuments in its honor being calculated to foster a wrong spirit in the minds of the people and especially the young, is deceptive and injurious, and has a tendency to block the wheels of genuine progress. Let us not ~~think~~ shrink from looking this objection squarely in the face; for it is particularly unwise even in self-justification to attempt to uphold a wrong principle, for sooner or later the right will prevail.

In order to have before us the objection against war strongly stated, listen to an

English writer against war, Jonathan Dymond. He says: "No one pretends to applaud the morals of an army; and as for its religion, few think of it at all. A soldier is depraved even to a proverb. The fact is too notorious to be insisted upon that thousands who had filled their stations in life with propriety and been virtuous from principle, have lost by a military life both the practice and the regard of morality; and when they have become habituated to the vices of war, have laughed at their honest and plodding brethren who are still spiritless enough for virtue or stupid enough for piety." The celebrated John Knox condenses his censures as follows: "It happens, unfortunately, that profligacy, libertinism and infidelity are thought by weaker minds almost as necessary a part of a soldier's

uniform as his shoulder knot. To hesitate at an oath, to decline intoxication, to profess a regard for religion, would be almost as ignominious as to refuse a challenge".

Before attempting to make answer let us refer to the same honorable senator (Charles Sumner) who never puts a statement obscurely. Thirty years ago in Boston on the 4th of July, which he denominated the Sabbath of the nation, Charles Sumner made his speech of speeches on "the true Grandeur of Nations. Once in conversation I heard him say, "men seldom make more than one exhaustive speech – the others become more or less a modification of it – that on the Grandeur of Nations was my speech".
And indeed Clay has none more ornate and beautiful, and Webster does not excel this in strength or grandeur of style; and were it not possible to appeal from Sumner during a time of profound peace to Sumner

adding sinews to a gigantic war, I would not venture to call attention to his postulates in this connection. He asks in the outset: "Can there be in our age any peace that is not honorable, any war that is not dishonorable?" Then goes on to say: "The true honor of a nation is conspicuous only in deeds of justice and beneficence, securing and advancing human happiness. In the clear eye of that Christian judgment which must yet prevail, vain are the victories of war, infamous its spoils. He is the benefactor and worthy of honor, who carries comfort to wretchedness, dries the tear of sorrow, relieves the unfortunate, feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, does justice, enlightens the ignorant, unfastens the fetters of the slave, and finally, by virtuous genius, in art, literature, science, enlivens and exalts the hours of life, or by generous

example inspires a love for God and man. This is the Christian hero; this is the man of honor in a Christian land. He is no benefactor, nor worthy of honor, whatever his worldly renown, whose life is absorbed in feats of brute force, who renounces the great law of Christian brotherhood, whose vocation is blood. Well may old Sir Thomas Browne exclaim: 'The world does not know its greatest men!' – for thus far it has chiefly honored the violent brood of battle, armed men springing up from the Dragon's teeth sown by Hate, and cared little for the truly good men, children of love, guiltless of their country's blood, whose steps on earth are noiseless as the angel's wing."

2 His picture of society may be suggested by this: "The mother rocking the infant on her knee stamps the images of war

upon his tender mind at that age more impressible than wax; she nurses his slumbers with its music, pleases its waking hours with its stories, and selects for his playthings the plume & the sword.xxxx and when the youth becomes a man, his country invites his services and holds before his bewildered imagination the prizes of wordly honor." Permit me one more picture from this speech: "Peaceful citizens volunteer to appear as soldiers, and affect in dress, arms and deportment what is called the 'pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war.'"

Now the principle underlying Sumner's graphic descriptions, the real basis of his argument against the Genius of War, we find stated by him succinctly as follows: "If it is wrong and inglorious when individuals consent and agree to determine

their petty controversies by combat, it must be equally wrong and inglorious when nations consent and agree to determine their vaster controversies by combat."

V. Answer – War defined – Sometimes right.

Now for an answer – that the soldier may not blush to wear his uniform, nor hide his battle flag, nor strive to forget the names of the engagements in which he participated; that his halting gait or scarred body may not be regarded as a pitiable deformity, or his children be taught to reckon him in the ranks of robbers, murderers and assassins.

It is not necessary to assert in opposition to the advocates of peace at any price, that war is right. War is a contest between nations or States or between parts of the same State and the State, waged for various purposes. I contend that it is some-

times right and sometimes wrong; that one party to the controversy may be in the right and the other in the wrong, or that each party may be partly in the right and partly in the wrong. The commandment of God on which all the reasoning of extreme peace men is based is: "Thou shalt not kill." But the other proper translation is: "Thou shalt do no murder." It was certainly never intended by the great law-giver that human life should never be taken, for in thousands of instances the same giver of law sanctioned and directed the taking of human life. And I believe it is a mistake to assert that the principles of law were ever changed by our Lord. He expressly states that He came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill. The everlasting principle was always the same as given by Moses when he says: "Thou

shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Our Lord's summary puts the whole in brief and comprehensive terms:—"Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself".

The taking of human life is not necessarily contrary to this principle—this eternal law. A man may take life in self-defence; He may strike the thief creeping into his house by night—the savage tomahawking his wife and children or attempting to burn his house. Society may institute a police force, be it army or navy, militia, or uniformed police men—the principle is the same. The exercise of extreme force often becomes absolutely necessary. The men who execute the extreme sentence of the law and take human life almost never

do it in hate – they are no murderers. It is the final and solemn act of self preservation on the part of human society.

VII. Senator Sumner answers himself.

Notice how thoroughly Mr. Sumner reversed ~~the~~ the wheels in his speech in the Senate of the United States, May 19th 1862, and how clearly and forcibly he states my view of the rights of war. He says: "Harsh and repulsive as these rights unquestionably are, they are derived from the overruling, instinctive laws of self-defence, common to nations as to individuals. Every community having the form and character of sovereignty has a right to national life and in defence of such life may put forth all its energies. Any other principle would leave it the wretched prey to wicked men abroad and at home."

VIII. The mitigation of war-rights.

This is all we ask – this is Charles Sumner's maturer thought, wrought out in the agony of our fearful struggle for national existence; and indeed my whole heart says to him a glad amen as he adds the following noble words half in reminiscence: – "I rejoice to believe that civilization has already done much to mitigate the Rights of War; and it is among long cherished visions, which present events cannot make me renounce, that the time is coming when all these rights will be further softened to the mood of permanent peace". Yes, indeed, more and more do the ministrations of love follow close upon the rights of war. The minister of religion enters the dungeon of the criminal condemned to die – the missionary precedes and often prevents the warlike savage from making his meditated forays and attacks – the Christian commis-

sions follow the armies to refresh and succor the sick and the wounded; and towards those plow-shares of permanent peace, civilized Christian men are seriously and actively projecting methods of settling controversies between themselves without the use of the sword.

VIII. The High Joint-Commission — Grant.

The settlement of our ~~recent~~ serious difficulties during our period of Reconstruction with England without war is a wonderful fact; a stepping stone to a broader platform of international law; a genuine tribute to the moral courage, quiet-firmness and clear-sighted wisdom of General Ulysses S. Grant; and, I think, a fair demonstration that, successful soldier as he was, he nevertheless always wrote peace higher than war. He preferred right-doing to punishment, and mercy to sacrifice.

IX. Sherman and the citizens of Atlanta

You cannot forget the words of Sherman in '64 to the citizens of Atlanta: "But, my dear Sirs, when that peace does come you may call upon me for anything. Then will I share with you the last cracker, and watch with you to shield your homes and families against danger from any quarter × × × × × × once admit the union, once more acknowledge the authority of the general government and instead of devoting your houses and streets and roads to the dread uses of war, I and this army become at once your protectors and supporters, shielding you from danger, let it come from what quarter it may."

The genuine subordination of Grant and Sherman to the authority over them was shared by all the million of men, with few exceptions, who bore arms against the

rebellion, and that little pregnant phrase of our leader "Let us have peace" uttered in 1865 penetrated every true soldiers breast with responsive joy.

X. The American soldier.

Neither John Knox of Scotland, Johnathan Dymond of England, nor the celebrated extremists of our own land, have given us fair portraitures of our American soldiery. A few unvarnished recitals of historic incidents will be better than argument. Here is one from Lexington, one hundred years ago: "Capt. Robin's son, a boy of ten years, heard the summons in the garret, where he lay, and in a few minutes was on his father's old mare, a young Paul Revere, galloping along the road to rouse Captain Isaac Davis who commanded the minute men of Acton. Davis was a young man of thirty, a gunsmith by trade, brave and thoughtful and tenderly fond of his wife and four children. The

2 11

company assembled at his shop, formed and marched a little way, when he halted them and returned a moment to his house. He said to his wife: "Take good care of the children, Mary." Kissed her and turned to his men, — gave the order to march, and saw his home no more. Such was the history of that night; in how many homes? The hearts of those men and women of Middlesex might break, but they could not waver. They had counted the cost. They knew what and whom they served; and as the midnight summons came they started up and answered: "Here am I!" Capt. Ephraim ~~Here~~ is a type of the men that broke the British yoke — young, a tradesman, a working-man — brave, thoughtful and tenderly ~~loving~~ loving his family.

XII. Col. John T. Trevble.

How carefully the orators select the names of those who first met the enemy and gave up their

lives in the procurement of our liberties; the first resistance to aggression; the first death — became the first-fruits for honor in the harvest of history. As in the Revolution so it is or will be in the sifted story of the great Rebellion. The first regular officer slain in this war was my intimate friend, Lieut. John T. Greble. He was breveted to the grade of Colonel for his "conspicuous gallantry, and meritorious conduct", on the field of his death, in the battle of Big Bethel, in Virginia, the 10th day of June, 1861. President Lincoln said of him, "that of all those who had fallen or who had distinguished themselves in the present contest, it was his deliberate judgement that not one had acted more heroically nor deserved so well of his country as Lieut. Greble". Another officer, Lieut. Klingstring, (afterwards himself killed in the war) wrote to the wife, Mrs. Greble, from near the battle ground.

I select from his letter a picture that speaks volumes: "It will I know be among your pleasanest recollections to be assured that scarcely an hour of the day passed that your husband did not make some remark to me which betokened his love for his wife and his babies. The letters he received from you were read and re-read; and from them he read to me with a father's delight the prattle of his little son. The morning before I left I entered his tent and found him reading his bible. Then again he expressed his desire to see you and his children". Speaking of his premonitions of death on that field, another said of him: "Before he entered the battlefield, he traced in pencil on paper, words of love for his cherished wife, of care for his children (so soon to be orphaned), of affection for his parents and friends, and of trust in Almighty God. This gives value to his manly daring, showing that it was no blood-thirsty impulse

or reckless presumption; but a perilous service at the call of duty and his country's need. This view sanctifies his martyrdom. It carries him to the field of battle with no loss of his gentleness, amiability and benevolence; but wrought to a high enthusiasm, and a calm and tranquil courage, by a real love of country and of mankind."

Beautiful in daily life – beautiful in character – beautiful in tender love for a precious family – beautiful in the symmetry and completeness of a brief career, and beautiful in death when ~~the little son Willie~~ his Willie smiled his recognition upon thy marble and coffined face! Yea, more beautiful in thy living, glorified spirit beyond the dark gateway of battle – thou art in life and death a standing protest against the calumny that would stain the officer's escutcheon or belittle his possibilities into a low, corrupt and wicked model.

XIII. Lieut. H. W. Camp – 10th Connecticut.

Perhaps as peerless a man as could be found in all the army was the adjutant of the 10th Connecticut volunteers, Lieutenant H. W. Camp. To show how erroneous is the idea of the necessity of fierceness and hate exhibited by those officers and soldiers most deeply interested in the issue of the struggle for the nation's life, permit me to give you a description of a scene just before his death at the battle of Fort Fisher where Gen. Terry gained his national fame + promotion. – Camp's face lighted up inspiringly, all aglow with excitement, expressive of its story of tenderest affection, of true courage and of firmest faith. It was never more fair, or bright, or beautiful, than in that hour and place of death, as the peerless, Christian soldier said with warmth and earnestness (concerning his abiding faith in the Lord.) "No, No, dear fellow, I do not doubt. I do trust Jesus, ful-

ly, wholly."

XIIII. The soldiers - liable to demoralization - corrective influences.

The soldiery, of course, partook of all the varied, kaleidescopic character of our population, and whether or not as a general rule they became worse, morally, in consequence of their army experience, is not easy to determine. Men who get the mining fever, and congregate in large numbers, separate from home, wives, children and refining society are apt to present no very comforting phases of human nature. The hunters, the fishermen, the seamen, the lumbermen, the railway men 500,000 strong and all men drawn together here & there away from the society and influence of ~~ladies~~ good women become comparatively rough in manners, habits and language. Similar effects do we find in the army, but there is in the service a counteracting discipline. Wrong doing is discouraged and punished, while good conduct

is constantly encouraged — good deeds commended and conspicuous acts rewarded. From personal knowledge I can testify that many men became better.

XIV. Private McDonald.

I remember McDonald of the 4th R. I. Always faithful to his soldier duties. He abandoned * 13/p drinking and profanity in the army. I cannot forget his last words to me: "How glad I am, General, that I am wounded and not you!"

XV. Harry Stinson.

I recall another private Harry Stinson, of the 5th Maine, whose reformation was completed while a prisoner of war. He was afterwards gradually promoted to a Sunday School teacher. Till his death, some years after, he exhibited all the graces of a pure, constant and self-denying Christian life.

XVI. A soldier of the 6th corps.

A visitor to an army hospital speaks of a soldier of the 6th corps who lost his right

arm close to the shoulder. "Day by day I found ~~I found~~ him cheery and uncomplaining. At first he was overflowing with fun all the time, but at last the terrible heat and strain upon his system so much reduced his strength that there was only a merry twinkle in his eye when I came in and a word of cordial greeting. × × × × When (on the battle field) he dropped his musket and reached round to take his useless arm tenderly in his left hand and walk off the field under a shower of balls, it was his first time off duty, after thirteen battles, since he entered the service. × × × × × Low spirits or complaint seemed impossible to him."

XVII. Sergeant at Missionary Ridge.

Hon. C. P. Smith, who left us a book of noble incidents ~~now Commissioner of Indian Affairs~~ of army service, ~~Affairs~~ is responsible for the ~~following~~ story of the dying Sergeant at Missionary Ridge. I wish he had given us the ~~soldier's~~ Sergeant's name. Take this as a type of our soldiers' loyalty to the country's flag, and of unselfish devotion to

the very end: "During the charge up the Ridge (Missionary) four soldiers were seen bearing back a comrade on a blanket. When they laid down their burden I knelt down by him and said: 'Sergeant, where did they hit you?' 'Most up the Ridge, Sir.' 'I mean, Sergeant, where did the ball strike you?' 'Within twenty yards of the top—almost up!' 'No, no, Sergeant, think of yourself for a moment; tell me where you are wounded?' And throwing back the blanket, I found his upper arm and shoulder mashed and mangled with a shell. Turning his eye to look for the first time upon his wound, the Sergeant said: 'That is what did it. I was hugging the standard to my blouse and making for the top. I was almost up when that ugly shell knocked me over. If they had let me alone a little longer—two minutes longer—I should have planted the colors on the top.'

Almost up, almost up, × × × × his own regiment, rallying under the colors that had dropped from his shattered arm, was shouting the victory for which the poor sergeant had given his young life, but of which he was dying without the sight."

I could multiply instances, but these few are sufficient to suggest that in this country we may find morality and religion in the army; that the soldier is not depraved to a proverb; that virtue and piety are not so rare as to be simply subjects of ridicule; that profligacy, libertinism and infidelity are not by any means a necessary part of a soldier's uniform; that profanity, drunkenness, infidelity and ~~duelling~~ rioting are not the special characteristics of our army. These crimes, it is owned with shame and sorrow, do somewhere prevail in a few spots in our land; and more or less afflict and

*XVIII. Concluding Summary

curse the best-regulated troops; but the army in peace or war is not conspicuous in these conditions or any other vileness. The Grand Army of which your post is but a segment can easily furnish the record-proof of soldiers, who like Thomas, Canby, Fisk, Mitchell, and a host of others, have been "conspicuous in deeds of justice and benificence, in securing and advancing human happiness."; of soldiers who like Greble, Camp and Stinson have carried "comfort to wretchedness and dried the tear of sorrow"; of soldiers who like Baird, Swayne, Sprague and Samuel Thomas have "relieved the unfortunate, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, dealt justly, and enlightened the ignorant"; of soldiers who like Grant, Sherman, Mead, Butler and a multitude of others, "unfastened the fetters of the slave and let the captive go free". Your soldiers are not always enrolled. They come from the

farm and the store; from the shop and the factory; from the country and the city; from the learned professions and the common schools; from all classes and conditions of society, and from all parts of the world to swell the ranks of our all embracing army of freedom. We will make no more aggressive war to extend domain — to ~~strengthen~~ reintroduce slavery or perpetuate its spirit and power — but let monarchists, monopolists, and ~~aristocrats~~ monarchists, or the greedy natives understand that we are no craven people; that the law of self-preservation — the grand instinctive law of self-defence — is written deeply in the hearts of millions of men, women and children, between the shores of the Atlantic and the Pacific. We will not barter our liberties of trade, of schools, nor of religion for any delusive dreams of ~~a~~ redistribution of wealth; nor for any plan ~~of a security against~~ false

formal cage breaking ~~in fact~~ society in fleeing for some hope of involving the destruction of our School system, on account of alleged

teaching is ~~the schools~~, or any ~~governmental pro-~~ ~~curement of a universal external unity of~~ ~~Faith~~ attempted union of Church & State for. No, no; give generous welcome to the highest, and broadest and deepest reaches of human ~~thought~~ and contrivance, and as far as is possible cripple, and narrow and enslave men, women and children no more. A tendency to make the rich richer & the poor poorer will be checked in time. All aristocracy in America is of mushroom growth. It will die in a generation. Citizenship will purify & defend itself. For a double curse is upon the corruptor of the ballot. Citizenship itself; for the citizen is a sovereign.

Our brave soldier-dead whom you so properly honor to-day have sealed these principles with their blood beyond recall. The maimed man cries out often in the bitterness of poverty the government has forgotten my service! ~~to~~ Remember the government is not the men in office now or at any time. The government is by the people. Let cheer fill his heart for the people are around and near to ~~be~~ befriend him, and they or some of them will remember his sacrifice. Imbecility and corruption and injustice must-

yield. For the land has been redeemed from thraldom by the shedding of precious blood, and the people, trusting in God, have accepted the sacrifice.

The Quaker heart of Whittier condenses the historic and prophetic truth:

"I dreamed of freedom slowly gained
By martyr meekness, patience, faith,
And lo! an athlete grimly stained
With corded muscles battle strained
Shouting it from fields of death!

I turn me, awe-struck from the sight
Among the clamoring thousands mute,
I only know that God is right
And that the children of the light
Shall tread the darkness under foot.

I know the pent-up fire heaves its crust
That sultry skies the bolt will form
To smite them clear; that nature must
The balance of her powers adjust;
Though with the earthquake and the storm.

God reigns, and let the earth rejoice!
I bow before His sterner plan.
Dumb are the organs of my choice
He speaks in Battle's stormy voice,
His praise is in the wrath of man!

Yet surely as He lives, the day
Of peace He promised shall be ours,
To fold the flags of war, and lay
Its sword and spear to rust away,
And sow its ghastly fields with flowers!"

(Decoration Day
at Portland)